

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for transmitting data to one or more online users of a communications system, the method comprising:
  - establishing a connection with one or more online users;
  - designating targeting rules applicable to the one or more online users, the targeting rules designating at least a target geographic location and at least one of a target type of access device or a target type of software;
  - acquiring context information of the one or more online users, the context information indicating at least geographic locations of the one or more online users and at least one of a client type of access device employed by the one or more online users or a client type of software employed by the one or more online users;
  - applying the targeting rules to the context information to identify a subset of the one or more online users that are associated with the target geographic location and who employ at least one of the target type of access device or the target type of software;
  - generating a message that contains geographic information describing conditions in at least a portion of the target geographic location; and
  - sending the message to the identified subset of the one or more online users.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the message comprises a notification message.
3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the targeting rules additionally designate an online location and applying the targeting rules to the context information comprises applying the targeting rules to the context information to identify a the subset of the one or more online users that are located in the target geographic location, who employ at least one of the target type of access device or the target type of software, and who are visiting the online location.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the targeting rules designate a ~~particular~~ the target type of access device employed by the one or more online users and applying the targeting rules to the context information comprises applying the targeting rules to the context information to identify ~~[[a]]~~ the subset of the one or more online users that are located in the target geographic location and who employ the ~~particular~~ target type of access device.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the targeting rules designate a ~~particular~~ the target type of software employed by the one or more online users and applying the targeting rules to the context information comprises applying the targeting rules to the context information to identify ~~[[a]]~~ the subset of the one or more online users that are located in the target geographic location and who employ the ~~particular~~ target type of software.

7. (Currently Amended ) The method of claim 1 wherein the context information of the one or more online users includes a token identifying ~~[[the]]~~ a geographic location of an online user.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the geographic information describing the conditions in at least ~~[[a]]~~ the portion of the target geographic location comprises a weather forecast for the target geographic location.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the geographic information describing the conditions in at least [[a]] the portion of the target geographic location comprises current weather conditions for the target geographic location.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the targeting rules include specified parameters and applying the targeting rules to the context information includes identifying the one or more online users meeting the specified parameters.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 further comprising ranking the one or more online users based on the specified parameters.

12 - 14. (Cancelled).

15. (Currently Amended) A computer program, stored embodied on a computer readable storage medium, comprising instructions for:

establishing a connection with one or more online users;

designating targeting rules applicable to the one or more online users, the targeting rules designating at least a target geographic location and at least one of a target type of access device or a target type of software;

acquiring context information of the one or more online users, the context information indicating at least geographic locations of the one or more online users and at least one of a client type of access device employed by the one or more online users or a client type of software employed by the one or more online users;

applying the targeting rules to the context information to identify a subset of the one or more online users that are associated with the target geographic location and who employ at least one of the target type of access device or the target type of software;

generate a message that contains geographic information describing conditions in at least a portion of the target geographic location; and

sending the message to the identified subset of the one or more online users.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 15 wherein the geographic information describing the conditions in at least [[a]] the portion of the target geographic location comprises a weather forecast for the target geographic location.

17. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 15 wherein the geographic information describing the conditions in at least [[a]] the portion of the target geographic location comprises current weather conditions for the target geographic location.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer program of claim 15 wherein the computer readable storage medium comprises a host device.

19. (Currently Amended) A communications apparatus, comprising a host configured to:  
establish a connection with one or more online users;

designate targeting rules applicable to the one or more online users, the targeting rules designating at least a target geographic location and at least one of a target type of access device or a target type of software;

acquire context information of the one or more online users, the context information indicating at least geographic locations of the one or more online users and at least one of a client type of access device employed by the one or more online users or a client type of software employed by the one or more online users;

apply the targeting rules to the context information to identify a subset of the one or more online users that are associated with the target geographic location and who employ at least one of the target type of access device or the target type of software;

generate a message that contains geographic information describing conditions in at least a portion of the target geographic location; and

send the message to the identified subset of the one or more online users.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein the host comprises a targeting server interconnected with an instant voting server and a routing processor.